

A sketchbook for Analytic Action

PROGRESS NOTES

6.18.1 Room never knows where the next submission will come from.

Hattie Myers With every essay, poem, photograph, image of art, piece of music, or description of activism that rolls in, we slowly get a sense of the shape of the next issue. The process of creating Room really does parallel the analytic process in this way. As editors, we pay close attention and think about how each new piece fits with what has come before. Threads appear, and the weave between submissions tightens. Room emerges, a thematic and graphic sum of its parts.

That's not what happened this time.

This time, the contributors to Room 6.18 described, drew, sculpted, composed, and photographed particular states of mind in the context of unique conditions. If there are common threads, they are blanketed beneath anguish, confusion, terror, and hope. As in Homer's roll call of ships at the beginning of the Iliad, where each ship bears the imprint of its place of origin, Room 6.18 is the marking of individual experience. It was only through the aggregation of individual ships that Homer could begin to approximate the vastness of the Hellenic world, which was so varied and so much larger than any one place. The whole of Room 6.18 also defies coherent description. Perhaps the whole world does. Something new seems to be happening, and it's hard to comprehend. Right now, Room exists as a port of call. —

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6.18.2

PSYCHIC SPACE

by Phyllis Beren
and Sheldon Bach

In their ground-breaking essay "Psychic Space," Phyllis Beren and Sheldon Bach describe the forces that can squeeze or explode our internal psychic universe in no less catastrophic terms than Hawking described the explosion or implosion at the end or the beginning of our physical universe. In retrospect, the content of this essay prepares us for the tumble of submissions that followed.

6.18.3

A Therapist Looks at A DIVIDED COUNTRY

by Dorothea Crites

Crites, a pastoral psychotherapist, describes a set of misunderstandings that violently destabilize the inner experience she carries of herself. In "A Therapist Looks at a Divided Country," Crites shares how these personal traumatic moments led her to a new way to think about bridging cultural chasms.



6.18.6

MIGRANT

by Lorenzo Figallo Calzadilla

Lorenzo Figallo Calzadilla is a writer and a sculptor. In “Migrant,” Calzadilla describes the heartbreak and trepidation of being between a home that no longer exists and a home that doesn’t exist yet. The images of his sculptures show the relationships he has captured in clay.

6.18.9

**CHUNHYANG:
#METOO IN THE
PENTATONIC SCALE**by Ittai Shapira
and Lauren Park

In “Chunhyang: #Metoo in the Pentatonic Scale,” composer and violinist Ittai Shapira collaborates with philosopher Lauren Parks to illustrate how in one of the most famous Korean works of pansori, a motif of self-respect can become a political and healing response to the psychological impact of trauma.

6.18.10

TREBLINKA

by Sylvia Flescher

It was in Stanislavov, a small town in Galicia, where Sylvia Flescher’s father first read Freud and decided to become a psychoanalyst. Polish universities were closed to Jews, so he chose to study medicine in Vienna. He practiced psychoanalysis in Rome and later was powerless to save any of his family, who were killed in 1942. Like her father, Sylvia Flescher became a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. In Treblinka, she returns for the first time to her father’s homeland and finds in this incomprehensible earth a sacred space.

6.18.4

**COUNTRY EX-ANIMA:
VENEZUELA**

by Roberto Echeto

Echeto, a dissident and one of Venezuela’s leading intellectuals, wrote an essay that, even in translation, cuts through the reader like a knife. In “Country Ex-anima: Venezuela,” Echeto forces us to recognize that, in the course of one generation, an entire nation can fall into an abject state that is beyond comprehension. Echeto is using *Room* — really he is grabbing *Room* with both hands — to beg us to see that, in Venezuela, there are human lives hanging on the edge of an abyss.

6.18.7

**TWITTERDEE
TWITTERDUM**

by William W. Harris

William W. Harris, who has worked with policy makers in Washington for close to forty years advocating on behalf of low income children and families, invites us to observe the dizzying collapsing of the space/time continuum as we know it through his literary illustration “Twitterdee Twitterdum.” But not for nothing: he is now advocating as strongly as he can that we do the only thing left for us to do — vote.

6.18.8

**CHILDREN
ON THE BORDER**

by Phyllis Beren

As a young child, Phyllis Beren lived with her parents in two different DP camps in the American Zone of Occupation in Allied Occupied Germany. In “Children on the Border,” Beren movingly describes what history can teach us: that there are life-threatening implications for children who are separated from their parents during wartime.

6.18.5

G TRAIN

by Gabriel Heller

Gabriel Heller is a creative writer who expresses the ineffable experience of being between things. In “G Train,” Heller rides a reverie: meandering in and out of time, hopscotching from one thought to the next, losing direction only to regain his footing. Heller’s journey is a homecoming story.



Collage by Leah Lipton

6.18.2

PSYCHIC SPACE

by Phyllis Beren
and Sheldon Bach

When our yoga teacher first taught us to visualize the space between two joints in our body and then to breathe into that space to open it up, we followed her instructions avidly and were pleased with the results. It wasn't until much later that we realized she was assuming that the mind could act on the body and that the body could act on the mind — that is, that the mind/body separation did not exist in Eastern practice in the same way that it does in Western medicine.

It was easy enough to imagine the mind affecting the body under certain circumstances: how our mouth waters when we are hungry and think of a great meal or how our body stiffens when we remember a traumatic situation. But how do we imagine a space between two joints and then fill it with air? Nobody had taught us how to do that, and yet, it seemed to work in a satisfactory way and to get better with practice when we tried it.

So it seemed as if the teacher's external suggestions to focus could influence our experience of internal bodily space and when we learned how to meditate, it could also influence our experience of internal psychic space as well. But psychic space seemed to be more of a problem. Everybody knows it without being quite sure what it means.

None of the standard psychological reference works contain an entry for psychic space, and although PEP gives over two thousand references, a cursory glance shows little agreement. By "psychic space," we mean simply the experience that people have of a space in their minds that usually includes their body, like the space of the room



**But we want
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that they're sitting in. This space can become infinitely large, like in an oceanic experience, or closing in to crush them, as in a claustrophobic experience. In both the oceanic experience of merging with a world of increasing infinite space and the claustrophobic experience of increasing loss of space, there is also an accompanying loss of the sense of agency. Indeed, the feeling of control or agency seems a most important factor in determining the meaning attributed to the experience of space and whether it is pleasurable or frightening.

Oceanic experiences, if self-induced or accepted, are often enjoyable or even ecstatic, and whether they are actively experienced as "I am taking over the world" or passively surrendered to as "the world is taking me over" or experienced symbiotically as "the world and I are merged," they can have a pleasurable, spiritual, and sometimes religious connotation. If, on the other hand, the feeling of space expanding is neither wished for nor welcomed but experienced as a loss of control and traumatic impingement, it can become a terrifying harbinger of annihilation anxiety and loss of self.

Feeling that one's psychic space is contracting can also be pleasurable or frightening, depending on the context and one's sense of agency. If we are intensely concentrating on a task, physical or mental, we may experience a narrowed psychic space, or "tunnel vision," that can be both isolating and yet also extremely gratifying. Many creative people prefer to work at night because external stimulation is minimized and other people are not around to distract them from this narrowed, concentrated vision. On the other hand, the closing in of physical and psychic space that is not under one's control can lead to terrible fears of being crushed, of drowning, of being unable to breathe, and of being annihilated. We have only to remember the experience of a panic attack or think of Poe's story "The Pit and the Pendulum." In real life, there is considerable experimental evidence to show that animals become more disturbed, violent, and aggressive as their cages become more and more crowded and their personal space narrows. Anyone who has traveled in a terribly overcrowded subway train can attest to the narrowing of both physical and psychic space and its effects on one's mood and sense of agency.

So presumably, for each person, there is also an ideal physical space and a psychic space in which they feel most comfortable and in which they also experience an optimal sense of agency and creativity, in which they feel most themselves. We each aspire to or may even be lucky enough to have found this ideal room of our own.

But we want to suggest that, in the world we live in today, both our physical and psychic space is being increasingly impinged upon, with dire results. Of course, the people who are reading this belong, for the most part, to that small portion of the world's population who have, in fact, homes of their own and perhaps a space of their own. But even we happy few are experiencing cities that are becoming overbuilt, subways and highways that have become dangerously overcrowded, schools and hospitals that cannot accommodate all who need help, a climate that leaves less and less room for adaptation; in short, our physical space is shrinking.

In a less noticed but more dangerous way, our psychic space also seems to be shrinking at an alarming rate. If we conceive of healthy psychic space as the space that promotes the greatest sense of agency and of individual creativity, then the incessant din from ringing cell phones, repetitive emails, loudmouthed newscasts and commercials, and a flood of information that substitutes quantity for quality impinges on us in a daily way that narrows our sense of psychic space. It was perhaps just as overexciting and probably less safe to walk down the streets in Elizabethan times, but it did not intrude into every private space in the way that our cell phones now follow us into the bathroom.



Our perspective narrows to the digital here and now, and we lose a sense of history and continuity

Along with the increasing spread of up-to-the-minute media that follows us everywhere we go, even more dangerous is the deliberate spread of misinformation or disinformation by parties who, consciously or unconsciously, are intent on producing chaos and destroying existing structures. Frightened as we are of terrorists with suicide vests that explode and spread shrapnel everywhere, this disinformation spreads fragments of lies and half-truths that fill our minds with lethal garbage and destroy our psychic space. We become swamped in toxic waste; we feel closed-in and our vision dims; we can think only in binary, either-or terms. Our perspective narrows to the digital here and now, and we lose a sense of history and continuity, and creative solutions to problems are foreclosed because we are being pushed to react on the same mental level as our attacker.

Being hammered by this barrage of half-truths, lies, and disinformation is like being interrogated twenty-four hours a day, under bright lights, by secret police; it induces a sleepy, drugged state of consciousness in which psychic space is dangerously narrowed and one's only desire is to escape, to go to sleep, or to surrender and make it stop. All of this interferes with our ability to think and, above all, to think as creative agents. Is there any possible way of saving ourselves from having our psychic space foreclosed and our sense of agency exterminated?

We believe that the work we do in psychoanalysis directly affects this, for in our work, we are actually helping people to open their minds and raise their level of thought and consciousness. We help them to substitute secondary process thinking for primary process, to connect digital moments so they can achieve a continuity of being; hold the past, present, and future in perspective; and understand the influence of the present on the past and of the past on the present and the future. We help them to grow beyond binary thinking, to understand that the analytic process is itself the gradual process of life and to tolerate this slow process of authentic change that allows for more nuanced thinking.

We live through with them their anger and guilt, their feelings of parricide and matricide, and we help them reframe their lives so they may once again be able to love and to work and to be fully alive and creative. Helping with all this helps to expand their psychic space and makes them able to own their agency and their life once again — or perhaps even for the first time.

In this process of working with patients, we also help ourselves, for relating to another person in this constantly devoted way is a life-giving experience for both people that expands our own psychic space, refurbishes our own sense of process, and leaves us with humility at the miraculous, intimate encounter of one human being with another. In the burning heat of the clinical engagement, values, morality, empathy, and truth take on real and powerful meanings and are no longer just empty shibboleths. Filling psychic space with real emotional meaning replaces despair with hopefulness. All of this has been said before and said better, but we need to constantly repeat it in the face of the growing assaults on our space, our thinking, and our sanity.

We also go on marches together and speak out in the public space and urge others to speak out and to talk to one another. Each one uses his or her creative powers in whatever way she can. This is our way of fighting back against what, at times, can seem to be a volcanic eruption of crimes and lies that threaten to foreclose our space and cut us off from our very sense of aliveness and creation. This is one important way that psychoanalysts can fight back! ■

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OUGHT.

HOW CAN
ART CHANGE
THE WORLD?

EXPLORE
ARTIST AND SOCIETY

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DAN
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GUSTAV METZGER

The planet is in a
horrific condition.
The necessity to
alert the public,
to alert vast
numbers of people
to the dangers
is the top priority.

KAZIMIR MALEVICH

Art no longer cares
to serve the state
and religion...
and believes that
it can exist in and
for itself.

EXPLORE
ARTIST AND SOCIETY

EXPLORE
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Graphic Design by N
Content devised by



I'm in a dissociated state.

Other people might say I'm numb, robotic, going through the motions, "not all there." But I'm a psychotherapist, so I recognize this sense of disconnection — a sad, distant mood — and I have a clinical label for it. Further, I know it means that something has happened that I can't digest emotionally. It's a mild state of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I've been jolted in a way that takes me out of my familiar and comfortable experience and function in the world. I've been traumatized — or, better, triggered — an experience and state close to trauma.

6.18.3

It happened suddenly.

A new acquaintance, a chat about life in the city, our love for the outdoors, pleasant, personal common ground. Then, somehow, the tone had changed. I was in the middle of a tense interchange.

"I have a question for you. Where are you politically?" His question caught me off guard. I knew that he described himself as conservative.

But surely, a New Yorker, the personally warm and open man I'd chatted with, was a moderate? "Oh, yes, you're conservative."

"Most definitely. Conservative. And you?"

"I'm on the liberal side."

"What does that mean? How much are you behind our president?"

I'm stunned at this point, feel I'm being interrogated. Where had the warm, relaxed man gone? How can we get back to the things we have in common — hiking, nature, travel? I try for humor — many conservatives don't approve of Trump's sexual behavior.

"Well, I'm not crazy about how he's treated women!"

"Oh, you're buying that stuff the media's putting out?" My heart

A Therapist Looks at

A DIVIDED COUNTRY

by Dorothea Crites



is sinking, and I'm wondering how to get off this train. Any way to get back to the two of us and off Trump? Or end this conversation, get away from this man? I'm trained to be polite. I keep trying. "I'm open to anyone with creative ideas for our culture. If Trump gets infrastructure going, gets jobs growing, I'm for that. But I have to say I haven't liked much of what he's doing."

"Creative ideas? What does that mean? What's not to like? Obama left us with the country in ruin, economy in free fall."

"We recovered from the recession under Obama. I think I read the deficit went down."

"The deficit ballooned under Obama!" He quoted huge numbers. "So I still want to know how you feel about Trump!"

"In my understanding, trickle-down economics, giving tax breaks to the very wealthy, doesn't really create jobs."

"When the top 4 percent of earners are paying 40 percent of taxes? That's a foolish thing to say! Good luck to you, sweetheart!"

"OK, goodbye."

End. Warm, engaged relating gone. I was relieved that he'd walked off. But my shock is mixing with growing anger. **Sweetheart? I'm foolish?** I hadn't insulted him, yet he'd dismissed and devalued everything I'd said, insulted me personally.

I'd consciously worked to stay calm and avoid dogmatic statements — my strategies to avoid escalating conflict. But I was left in a hole feeling furious and more. Expecting to relate person to person and instead being interrogated and used as a punching bag... Trying to shake it off wasn't working. The numb state set in.

I haven't recovered yet from Thanksgiving, my last trip to

Trump country. It's hard to remember that my in-laws live in a blue state because when we are staying with them, everything in life is colored by conservative politics and religious life. They have highly controlled personal habits and are on structured diet and exercise regimes each time we visit. Why wouldn't their politics, religion, and personal habits be likewise disciplined and highly structured? Aligned?

These folks are family, and it is important to me and my son to maintain a family connection with them. Thanksgiving is the designated holiday for this. We had agreed to leave politics out of conversation and stick to personal topics. But inevitably, there would be the odd comment that reminded us all that we live in different lands: Visiting someone with CNN on TV, my brother-in-law asks, **"Why not Fox news?"** We watch the 2010 Martin Sheen movie *The Way*. How could a spiritual quest, a pilgrimage, be bad? Spirituality is something we all value and engage in.

In *The Way*, Sheen is joined by three other walkers, each with something they're looking to transform on this voyage. The sole female walker turns out to have had an abortion while in a physically abusive marriage and spills the beans about her pain over this. My brother-in-law says, **"She's clearly guilty over having an abortion!"** And I say, **"Well, maybe more grieving over the abortion and for the situation she was in, for herself?"** A lump formed in my throat. I'd hoped to maintain the connection with them, and now the conflict has surfaced, and I feel more anger than anything.

The truth is, I think the movie does present this woman as feeling

personal guilt over the abortion. For me, this turns the movie into a moralistic antiabortion screed, which changes the enjoyment I'd had. Certainly, there are some women — and men — who feel great grief and guilt about an abortion. In my experience, they are in the minority among people who chose abortion. I believe strongly that both women and men need to have the power to choose whether to go through a pregnancy and become a parent.

So there were maybe three or four uncomfortable points where conflict showed through in this visit.

They were each quickly shut down. We all wanted to keep the connection. Yet returning from this visit, again, I felt dissociated. Something about visiting a world where I couldn't speak or respond freely left me uncomfortable and numb.

We had tiptoed around religion — anything that could be a spiritual topic had turned toward a conservative Catholic perspective. Touching on any topic that could lead to politics (and there are so many these days), we all froze, knowing that continuing could reveal a terrible divide. In retrospect,

I wonder if that fear is the fundamental obstacle to dialogue and connection:

Do we freeze to avoid crashing into conflict? Do we freeze to avoid exposing the abyss?

Why is it so dangerous to relax and let the conflict unfold? The truth is that it's terrifying to feel dismissed and devalued about things that feel deep and fundamental.

It is also frightening to experience the rage that comes so easily when that happens. In the past, I've tried to argue rationally with this brother-in-law over abortion rights but immediately found myself in a place of powerless fury that this seemingly callow,

unthinking man could have actual power — through voting and through financial influence — to limit what any woman chooses to do with her reproductive life.

In theory, I believe it's important to keep bridges of communication open, to see the human being in the other. None of us has absolute truth. But in these confrontations, I am not in that open state. I am in a primitive rage.

I think many people in our country are currently in this PTSD-like state. Progressives see their deeply held values dismissed and mocked. Trump's attack-first approach is everywhere in the news. Conservatives? Maybe they are triggered by radical social and economic change, racial diversity, loss of life as they picture it.

So what can we do?

First, rather than taking it at face value that the sky is falling, perhaps we can recognize that we are in this triggered state. In this frame of mind, we move quickly to a vulnerable part of ourselves and to our most basic defenses. Perhaps we can try not to act out of this sensibility, though it's natural to hit back when we feel bullied or abused.

Some approach trauma and the state of PTSD from the perspective of brain science — we get stuck in the “animal” brain when trauma overwhelms us. Bessel van der Kolk writes of the limbic system, a reptile and mammalian brain in us which can overwhelm the prefrontal cortex, the seat of rational thought. Others, like Janina Fisher, approach the effects of trauma from the inner-child perspective. In Internal Family Systems, we are taught that the child in us goes into fight, flight, freeze, or submit mode. In treatment, we then give that child

what is needed to soothe her and bring in the adult self to engage in the public and political sphere.

In this kind of therapy, we do “resourcing,” bringing to mind people — those we actually know or fantasy characters (movie figures are fine) who help us feel like, and gradually become, our best selves. Some do body-based “grounding” breathing deeply, sitting or standing with a lengthened spine, to be put back in touch with our adult selves. Connecting with real community, supportive family and friends, nature, our spiritual life, exercise: these are a few ideas for “resourcing” outside of therapy.

No, I'm not advocating navel-gazing instead of political action, though that has been the stereotype of psychotherapy's contributions.

The point I want to make is that we act from a much more solid and effective place when we are firing on all cylinders. When we're in an unconscious state of fight, flight, or freeze, we're not there. We're in a PTSD-like, triggered state. It is tempting to go with the primitive, to find others to fan the flame and get a temporary high of rage going. There's a lot of that happening.

I believe many of us in this country, regardless of where we are politically, find ourselves frequently in this triggered psychological territory. We know this when we stop seeing the humanity in people we disagree with. We experience it when we lose sight of the limited power we do exercise in this mixed and flawed democracy. The divide, the standoff, may be, in part, a frozen defense, coming out of a form of PTSD. Recognizing that, returning to a more fully resourced state, we are better suited to political life together. ■



ZOMBIES OF MY CITY, Juan Mariño
[Go to the Online Gallery](#)

Mariño's work evokes the privation and moans of those who suffer a deep crisis similar to the post-war artistic expressions. His discourse focuses on social deterioration. Life on the street invites him to know aspects of society that will later become a collection of portraits that recall Fauvism of the early twentieth century. Color emerges in his work as a symbol of immaculate Caribbean joy and a special sensitivity for the sublime, of one who looks at beauty even in the very nature of horror. In these expressions, his search is punctuated by the impression and the feelings produced by those emotional and erratic expressions before which the gaze is usually removed. His portraits capture both imaginary characters as well as neighbors and characters from the city who eat from the garbage or who emerge from outbreaks of madness.



The news about Venezuela is as alarming as it is strange. Each day brings a new mix of tragedy and absurdity.

Every Venezuelan (or anyone who has spent time living in this country) knows that anything — however rare, excessive, unreasonable, outrageous, or illegal as it may seem — can happen.

Venezuela is no longer a country; it is a layering of misfortunes and problems with no pretty solutions.

The supermarket shelves are empty. Entire aisles are filled with air and with products selling at inaccessible prices.

The pharmacies are empty. There are people, more and more people, asking for antibiotics or blood pressure medicine, antidepressants or antihistamines. People are desperate and are searching everywhere to find medications that no longer exist anywhere.

The Venezuelan economy is destroyed. There is no cash. It is difficult to believe how very few bills are circulating. Since 2003, there have been a strict exchange-control mechanisms in place and the government has intervened in all productive activities using arbitrary takeovers and expropriations, fiscal audits and price controls. Over the last few years, the central government participated in strange and risky financial operations, the consequences of which erupted in October 2017 in the form of a fatal hyperinflation.

The day ends early. At six o' clock the streets empty out; orphaned of people and light. There are few streetlamps, few illuminated billboards, little — very little — nightlife. There is a thick silence in the air. Everyone is shut away in their homes; they sleep, cook, ponder in front of a screen, chew on their sadness and unease between the four walls of their homes. Better to be at home than in the street, that preserve of strange people, zombie-like vagabonds, forgotten and barefoot children who now go around in groups, screwing with each other, screaming at each other, begging for food at bakery doors.

It's no longer safe to leave bags of trash on the street to be picked up before the garbage truck. There are always people rummaging through them, looking for food and leaving the sidewalks full of waste, the scraps and decomposing pieces quickly turning into beacons for the flies of the world.

In the landscape, hunger hangs between the sun and the stars — overbearing, overflowing and unforgivable disgrace.

Venezuela is the country of fainting, of bony people who travel pressed up against each other in cargo trucks (not in buses where it is no longer possible to change a tire or buy a battery) Venezuela is also a country full of the suicides of people who can not live anymore under this burden of suffering and who finally abandon themselves in this last painful act. Venezuela is a strange and afflicted space, facing the horror its people have bestowed upon it a thousand and one times.

6.18.4

COUNTRY EX-ANIMA: VENEZUELA

by Roberto Echeto

*Translated by Mafe Izaguirre
and Anayvelyse Allen-Mossman*



Over the years nothing has been more fertile than corruption.

Governed by Chavism, Venezuela became a vortex of shady business, the everlasting spoil of hundreds of hyenas (nationals and foreigners) who gorged without fulfillment.

The unfathomable darkness of the soul. The lack of control. The addictive pull of wealth fed an idea that we could feed forever on something that would never end, something that emanated naturally from our bones.

All of Venezuela is full of orphaned buildings. The government executed an ambitious and disorganized housing plan that filled the country with images

straight out of Pyongyang, bringing into relief how the old plumbing and electric systems have not been properly maintained or replaced for years. The result? In all of Venezuela, there are long and disgraceful blackouts. Water runs two days a week.

(Simulate progress. Simulate efficiency. That's the motto)

Venezuela is full of unfinished works. Anyone who travels the main Central Regional Highway between Maracay and Valencia will see kilometers of huge columns supporting the air or holding vast structures of oxidized metal. Anyone traveling along the eastern approach to Caracas will see the same enormous concrete pillars, the same abandoned corroded structures. These two precocious ruins are part of an unfinished railway project that has been postponed dozens of times. Only when the presidential elections approach are the plans dusted off. Only then are workers contracted. Only then does heavy machinery begin to produce the false dream of progress. Only then is another long and dismal train station joined to the straggle.

(Simulate that there's a train. Simulate the country's progress. Simulate and simulate like an enormous and prodigious theater troupe.)

It would not be correct to say that Venezuela discovered its violent vocation thanks to Chavism.

Let's just say that the kindness of the climate and the people's eternal smile hide a truth that can no longer be hidden: Venezuela is a violent country with a history of bloodshed swallowed in time.

One need only look at number of murders and robberies to realize that beyond the proliferation of illegal arms, drug trafficking, violent vendettas, and theft, there is almost a morbid pleasure in having a pistol tucked in your waistband or between your hands. There is nothing more seductive in this country than carrying a gun in order to terrify others. What other explanation can there be for the endless calling of the Venezuelan military? Or for the proliferation of thugs?

It's almost as if all the complexities, all the deficiencies, and all of the resentments

acquired the form of a rifle or a revolver.

It's certainly true that when Chavismo came to power, crime was already out of control. The central government claimed it would put an end to poverty and impunity — those two conditions that stimulated the growth of the underworld. As time passed the government slackened their grip on criminals and ended up encouraging the formation of armed groups who could harass their opposition and defend them if needed. In other words, crime became the intimidating weapon of the government.



The Venezuelan opposition has not been up to the challenge that Chavism represents for the country.

The actions of the opposition over the past twenty years have been erratic, contradictory and, in many cases, lukewarm.

It has been incapable of generating an alternative platform to Chavism's own messianic rhetoric.

~~It could never define its adversary. Only total ruin has forced the opposition to realize that the Chavist project consisted in destroying the country in order to dominate and stay in power.~~

~~Perhaps it was the confrontation with Chavism's left-leaning origins that made the opposition act with such caution and leniency.~~

Empty.

It feels empty. Everywhere, empty. People who have left: friends, acquaintances, neighbors, colleagues, family. No one knows precisely how many Venezuelans have left. Some say three; others say four million. Who knows? The only thing left is emptiness, the memory, the space in the air, the distant news on Whatsapp. Those who have left speak of the emigrant's epic. Those who have stayed don't say much to us or to the news. Some take care of the elderly —their own or ones they have adopted. Whatever the circumstances demand. Others take care of houses, apartments, dogs, cats, gardens, and their businesses running ever tighter margins. Outside, no one speaks much of those who stayed. They want to believe that their lives haven't changed; they want us to believe that things are the same. They have nothing to say beyond the heroic effort it takes to buy cheese or sanitary pads.

The children wearing surgical face masks cry out from their wheelchairs to continue their chemotherapy. The thin, doubled-over, dry men, and women beg for machines that would allow them to continue their dialysis. The starving elderly demand their pensions. There are people pleading for antiretrovirals and medications that will make the organs transplanted within their bodies work. The weakest are fighting for more than their lives—they are fighting for their dignity. ■



HUNGER, A VISUAL ESSAY

by Federico Parra.

A girl scavenges for food in the streets of Caracas on February 22, 2017. Public hospital doctors declared that hunger is killing Venezuelan children at an alarming rate.

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Instagram: [@FedericoParra](https://www.instagram.com/FedericoParra)



6.18.5

G TRAIN

by Gabriel Heller



I got on an M train,
 thinking it was an F train,
 I wasn't paying attention,
 and rode it out to Williamsburg
 by mistake. I looked up
 from the story I was reading
 about two mathematicians,
 one of them losing his mind,
 where am I,
 I was on a bridge, nothing was
 familiar, then I realized,
 Oh, it's the Williamsburg
 Bridge, I'm not losing
 my mind, just on the wrong
 train, going in the wrong
 direction, way off track.
 But luckily nothing is unfixable,
 I got my bearings, got off
 at the next stop. I could walk
 to the G train if I knew
 where it was, but the GPS
 on my phone wasn't working,
 it was an old phone, just three
 years or so, but in phone years
 that's really old, I couldn't even
 take a picture with it anymore.
 I came down the stairs
 from the station, totally unsure
 which direction to walk in,
 so I just chose one way
 and started walking,
 and when I passed a guy
 in a hard hat carrying a plastic
 bag full of maybe lunch,
 I asked, Do you know where the
 G train is? The G train, that's
 that way, he said, pointing
 in the opposite direction,
 so I turned around but didn't
 want to walk with him,
 what would we talk about,
 so I stopped and looked
 at my phone, or pretended

to look at it, and then I started
 walking in the right direction,
 a little ways behind the man
 who'd told me where to go,
 and when he stopped to talk
 to another man smoking a
 cigarette outside a bodega,
 I passed him, and he said,
 Just right straight ahead,
 and I thanked him.
 So now I'm on the G train,
 which is the same train
 I ride with my daughter
 to and from her tap dance class
 every Tuesday. When we're
 coming back these days,
 it's already dark, and the train
 goes elevated, and we can look
 inside people's apartments.
 I see a living room! my daughter
 says. I see a kitchen! I say.
 There's the artist's studio!
 she says, and then the train goes
 underground, and we talk
 about other things, play I Spy
 or try to notice people,
 like the guy with the funny
 mouth, he just walks around
 always frowning, or the woman
 with her eyes closed,
 what's she thinking, probably
 something boring,
 or the guy who, shhh, listen,
 he's singing, what's he singing?

**Can you give me sanctuary
 I must find a place to hide**

I finish reading the story
 of the two mathematician lovers,
 one with Alzheimer's.
 I admire the story,
 its straightforward strangeness,



its quiet tragedy, told
from the perspective
of the wife of a grad student
coming from another city
to work for the mathematicians,
who in fact are lovers.

The story reminds
me of something our teacher
told us in our Clinical Seminar
last night. You feel badly
for people, she said, that's
why you want to do this work.
It was an odd declaration,
maybe a little tongue in cheek,
but in the moment it seemed
perfectly true, given the terribly
sad case material one
of my classmates was presenting,
and after she said it, or maybe
before, the teacher told us about
her interest in the American
prison system, how the head
of the education program
at a prison was coming
to her apartment for dinner
that very night, she told us.
He himself had been in prison
for many years and was a very
interesting man. He had
an IQ of 180, but that's another
story, she said. In fact,
this very morning, sitting
at my dining room table,
I read a story about life
in prison, a prison in California.
I didn't care for the story,
although it wasn't bad.
The writer had written
a novel that everyone had loved,
everyone except me,
I didn't love it. I could do better
than this, I thought at one point,
as I was reading this story
about systematic brutality,
about the relentless
and inescapable degradation
of human life within

an American prison,
but the story seemed
to me to take a kind of pleasure
in the degradation, a kind
of touristic pleasure, I think,
as the G train emerges
from the tunnel, the view opens
up, there's Redhook, there's
the water, the Statue of Liberty,
New Jersey in the distance,
and I think about our teacher
from Clinical Seminar,
how she said we wanted
to become psychoanalysts
because we felt badly for people,
and I do feel badly for people,
not all people, but many people,
most people, people in general,
with some exceptions,
but I'm not sure that's actually
the reason for me wanting
to do this work. Really,
I think the reason has to do
with what happened
to me while I was working
in prison, teaching a writing
class that revolved around
the themes of violence
and transformation. In prison,
I could feel a power inside
myself at times, or maybe just
a strong wish come alive in me,
a wish to work to transform
the violence that is increasingly
part of the air we breathe,
this American air, and I realized
there with my students, i
n that long narrow classroom
next to the law library, barred
windows looking out
on a beautiful view of rolling
fields and the Catskill

mountains, that I was
more interested in learning
how to do that better, more
interested in learning
how to help people transform
the violence inside them,
the mindless violence
that smothers the spirit and kills
life, than I was in talking about
texts, talking about sentences
and paragraphs, although
I'm interested in that too,
I think, as I hear the conductor
announce my stop, and a woman
sitting at the end of the car says,
I'm taking myself
to the beach, I'm sick
of not doing shit. Who is she
talking to? The man across
from her is asleep, buried
in his jacket. It has been a long,
out-of-the-way journey,
much longer than it needed
to be, but I'm happy that I wrote
something, and I read a story
I liked. The faces and bodies
on the platform blur,
as we pull into the station,
I see them through the scratched
glass, and then they're gone,
and others appear, other faces,
other bodies, more clearly
as the train slows down.
Good-bye, G train! You used
to run so poorly, but somehow
you have gotten a lot better
over the years. All the other
trains have gotten terrible,
but you are good, or mostly
good. I can always count
on you to get me home. ■

6.18.6

MIGRANT

by Lorenzo Figallo Calzadilla

Translated by Alexandra Méndez

Dreams, words, ideas, memories, contradictions—all of it is wrapped together in your feelings. The moment of leaving nears. The departure is certain. Your grounding, your emotional world, is in constant movement. There's an earthquake under your feet and also, very forcefully, in your head. Your thoughts are chaos. Today a doubt arises, tomorrow another. That idea that you have to be daring and do it appears a thousand times in your mind. There is a fear of the destination. What will it be like? Will it work out? Will I find work? Will people accept me or reject me? I made a life here — will it be the same there? Will I have chosen the right place? Should I sell the apartment or wait to see how things go? Will the money I bring be enough? How will the place be for our children? Questions that can't be answered from here. You have to go and live. The dispersion takes hold of your being and, in parallel, your sanity. Every step must be analyzed.



The existential cycles close.
Your ancestors came centuries ago,
full of hope. Surely an immense
fear accompanied them.
Your great-great-grandparents
with their parents crossed
the oceans in boats. They were full
of illusions. When they got here,
they were welcomed. In this way,
they settled, structured homes,
and equally, they opened their
doors so that others from over there
could come. There was room
for everyone; all were well received.
The great cycle of universal
travelers was once more a fact.

They worked, and family
generations were formed.
That's how it's been; that's how
it was. They wanted this land
to belong to their children,
their grandchildren,
their great-grandchildren,
and so on forever, with its *sancocho*
soup, its *Araguaneyes* trees,
and its *Turpial* birds. Ethnic groups
joined together, fed millions
of lives, making society.
Cultural and genetic diversity,
with its richness,
nourished humanity.

Fate has rules that are hard
to understand. When
it was thought that the family
stability was guaranteed, reality
made its move on the board
of history. Political models have
a destructive force if they
are not based on coexistence
and otherness.
Disunion and exclusion strengthen
tyrannies. The shadow
of a totalitarian model
had emerged, darkening everything
in its path. The country moved
— it did so crudely. People
learned, painfully, that nothing
is guaranteed on this earth.

Many people, upon long reflection,
began to go away, nearer
or farther away, from the land
where they were born.
Some people have ventured
daringly; others have left
a little more sure in terms
of money and work.
Everyone has uncertainty.
Families have split. In most
homes, someone has migrated.

These days, another family closes
the doors of the country.
The members who stay say
goodbye. They are headed
to some other part of chance.
All their people are dispersed
in great numbers in distant
countries. They carry a message
in their hearts: to convey
to their children how beautiful
and generous this land
has been. They must tell them
that it was here that they were
born, grew up, lived, sang,
worked, loved, sowed seeds.

You take your last nostalgic walk
around the block, the corners
of the old house of memories.
You take down the paintings.
You pull together your emotions.
You go over every story:
the university choir, the youth
chorus, the art, the visit
to the geriatric hospital,
old Caracas, those photographs —
so many happy and sad stories
from your memory.
Certain things go in suitcases,
others in your soul, and some stay
behind. Regrettably, there isn't
room for everything.
A sepia-colored sadness
is your companion. The hour
is nearing. Beloved land —
how much pain. A grandmother
is left crying in her solitude. ■



6.18.7

TWITTER DEE TWITTER DUM

by William W. Harris

Trump.

I am discombobulated
because of Trump.
I binge watch TV
– not Fox, MSNBC.

He has

infected everything:

my dreams,
my conscious,
my unconscious,
dinners with my family,
my work.

**He's brought
on a societal depression.**

AND I AM NOT

ALONE.

There are reports
that **government workers
are showing up depressed;**
they argue and fight
with their families at home,
and office mates at work.

HOW CAN **THIS** HAPPEN?

He has out-McLuhaned
McLuhan. The internet
– social media, radio,

magazines, newspapers
almost all featuring new
op-eds. *He's mastered,
no,
conquered all media 24/7.*

He has blown past
suspension of disbelief
with alternative facts
and science denial.

He is the

NEWS – he has become
our ubiquitous **R e a l i t y.**

I went to a meeting
recently where the editor
of a book on his sanity
– or lack thereof –
was discussed.

The audience had many
Democratic members
of Congress.

Throughout
the presentation
one could hear
the plaintive gasps

**of why?
how could this
be happening?,
what can we do?**

The answer
always
came back –
NOTHING.
We are
helpless.
Yes,
we can vote,

but we
cannot pass
the 25th amendment
legislation. No, we can't
impeach at this time.
We don't have enough

VOTES.



Maybe there is
a thin thread of hope.
Our vote could
matter...

IT WAS A **SHOCK**
to see all these

leaders seemingly reduced
to: **"all we can do
is hope that**

**the Resistance
will last til November."**

The
Resistance
to Trump –

if we just hold
on collectively,
can we change
the leadership
in Congress?

Yes, we

had some big marches
and impressive turnout
results. But can this be
translated to voter action in

November?

That was it.

Our only chance.

Voting is possible, but

will

THE RESISTANCE

Some of the members also spoke
about **Trump** infecting their lives,
their homes and families, their

offices...

some of them even confessed
to binge watching TV.

Have these people become impotent?

l a s t ?

Have they lost their own individual agency? Should they be able to do something, anything! Has each

individual lost his/

her agency or have they

collectively lost their

agency? **WAS THE**

RESISTANCE THE

beginning sign of our society regaining its agency?

DID THEIR UNREMITTING FRUSTRATION TURN INTO UNFOCUSED ANGER? WHAT HAPPENS TO SOMEONE WHO HAS no outlet for this anger?

A few weeks later, I went to a meeting with a number of psychoanalysts. They also talked about

Trump. They confessed to binge TV watching, and expressions of impotence — “what can we do” —

helplessness.

I remarked that it sounded like the impotence

the Congress people expressed at the earlier meeting.

FRUSTRATED. Anxious. And these were psychoanalysts!

What is going on here?

Is the same stimulus – Trump – evoking the same frustration^{impotence}

from both Congress people and psychoanalysts?

One common thread I think is the perceived loss

of agency from the participants.

What are the feelings connected to losing one’s agency?

WHAT HAPPENS

to us when we go from living our regular lives and then almost instantaneously losing a sense of our own

agency? We begin to feel a palpable impotence, frustration and

sometimes, rage. Does it make us

regress to our own feelings of

powerlessness in infancy? Do we

mourn our loss of agency? Can it be

regained? Is there any hope that our feeling of impotence can be erased by participating in the

RESISTANCE?

This is a time when we need each other.

We need to bind/bond and have each other’s back.

Yet the ether provides a completely opposite

environment – almost as if there is a centrifugal

force driving

us apart from one another, when we are desperately

wanting or needing

a centripetal force – something



that will bind us together.

We have lost the unifying symbol of **“everything is going to be alright”** – think Walter Cronkite.*

Why/when did the current ether take over? Think the multitude of social media outlets – the plethora of TV and cable channels – radio - for each playing to its own specialized demographic for which

advertisers will pay more and more dollars for a set of eyeballs, ears, and clicks.

We have six months left in the year to endure these feelings of impotence. We have to, but we

must vote, organize, and mobilize others to vote. We need

to take back our country, majority, and

retake the power that the majority can bring.

We must regain our individual agency if our democracy is to work. We do have the power to

vote.

We also have the power to organize others to vote. We need to exercise it, protect it, go beyond

ourselves and collectively use it to exercise the agency we once enjoyed and put it to use to stop the

* I recently heard a Congressman allude to the same thing. His comments were made after I had written this.





6.18.8

Phyllis Beren



Photography by Mafe Izaguirre

As I thought about the horror of separating young children from their families at the U.S. border, what came to mind was the London bombings during World War II, when many children were evacuated to the country to stay with foster families. I recalled the war nurseries of the Hampstead Clinic in London and the work of Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, who ran these nurseries and observed the children who were separated from their mothers during the war. One of their observations that has stayed with me for more than forty years of practice as a psychoanalyst and child therapist was the traumatic effect of separation from their mothers. “The war acquires comparatively little significance for children so long as it only threatens their lives, disturbs their material comfort or cuts their food rations. It becomes enormously significant the moment it breaks up family ties and uproots the first emotional attachments of the child within the family group. London children, therefore, were on the whole much less upset by bombing than by evacuation to the country as a protection against it.” (p. 37 *War and Children*, by Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham)

I don’t believe it is an exaggeration to say that our country is now engaged in a war — a war to overthrow our democracy, a war on our constitution and legal system, a war on our principles, and a war on being human. Usually the first to suffer are the most vulnerable and defenseless, as we are now witnessing in the treatment of young children at our border. We are giving no thought to the child abuse we are inflicting on these children — in fact, we are doing the opposite; we are turning a blind eye, which is the main characteristic of child abuse. Child abuse takes many forms, not only visible, external bruises. The wrenching separation that these young children are experiencing every minute



they are apart from their families is a trauma inflicted that will remain an open wound. Daily, we are reading about the visible distress these children show — terror, severe separation anxiety, sleeplessness, nightmares, crying, begging for their parents.

Why is zero tolerance an acceptable policy? “Zero tolerance” implies a police state where torture or murder is necessary if one crosses the border illegally. Zero tolerance gives permission to commit child abuse by separating the children from their parents. All child experts agree that such separation is a form of child abuse that can leave the children with permanent mental and physical damage. Separation of children from parents is child abuse; it is not an attempt to enforce the law, but rather an attempt to terrorize the parents by threatening them with the permanent loss of their children. Families with children can be detained together if necessary, without resorting to abuse by separating children from their parents, destroying the family bond, and inflicting severe and often irreversible mental and physical harm on the children.

As a child, I had the good fortune to survive World War II with my parents by my side. We were together in a displaced persons camp in Germany in the American section from 1946 to 1952 before immigrating to the United States. The United States Army, our heroes, who oversaw the camp provided a safe community for the refugees. There is no comparison between my childhood in the DP camp and the children separated from their families at our border. Today, I no longer recognize the country we live in.

We adult citizens of this country and our elected representatives know of this abuse, and we are nevertheless allowing it to continue, which makes all of us complicit. ■





Taking Children from Families is Child Abuse

ACTION:

IPTAR'S CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOTHERAPY PROGRAM AND THE ANNI BERGMAN PARENT-INFANT PROGRAM THANK OVER 165 REPRESENTATIVES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR CO-SPONSORING CONGRESSWOMAN ROSA DELAURO'S RESOLUTION:

H. Res. #927

"What the Trump Administration is doing is immoral at its core. It is **child abuse**—there is no way around it. Kids as young as 18 months are being held in custody away from their parents, with many showing signs of separation trauma that can cause **irreparable harm**. This is a clear issue of right and wrong, and all of us must oppose it as forcefully as possible."

—Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the House of Representatives, that Congress:

1. Condemns the Trump administration's zero tolerance policy that is separating children from their parents at the United States border.
2. Identifies this policy as **child abuse**, as it fails to protect children crossing the border.
3. Recognizes that this **zero tolerance policy may inflict irreversible damage** to the health of these children that could have a lifetime of consequences.
4. Remains actively committed to keeping children and their parents together as they come to the United States, many of whom are fleeing violence.

Get involved in this cause:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/separation-of-babies-from-families-at-the-border>



Photography by Victor Lozano



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6.18.9

CHUNHYANG: #METOO IN THE PENTATONIC SCALE

by Ittai Shapira
and Lauren Park

A young woman from Namwon known for her virtue captured the unwanted attention of the newly installed magistrate who was arrogant, cruel, and narcissistic. The young woman's father was a government official, but her mother, whom she lived with, was a courtesan, and so perhaps the magistrate believed he could easily coerce her to be his companion. But she had a secret. She had fallen in love with the former magistrate's son, Myong-yong, who became smitten with her at first sight. They were married in a short time in a secret wedding, and she swore her love and faithfulness to him. They were pressed for time, in part, because the young man was due to go away with his father, who had been recalled by the king. The new magistrate was his father's replacement and was told of the woman's legendary beauty, and he had to possess her. But despite increasing verbal and physical threats by the elderly new magistrate, the young woman resisted. She remained steadfast in her love for her husband and encouraged the magistrate to focus on his duties of governance, rather than on her. This enraged the magistrate, and he lashed out by locking her away in a jail cell. Still, she persisted.

This is the basic plot of one of the most famous tales in the Korean oeuvre of pansori (a traditional form of musical storytelling accompanied by a drum) titled *Chunhyang* ("Spring Fragrance"). The title's namesake and her unshakable virtue are at the center of a story that long predates the #resistance and #metoo movements, though it has resonances with them. Perhaps it is not coincidental that of the major economies of East Asia, it is only Korea that has seen much progress in terms of the #metoo movement. The "resistant woman" trope was already in the culture despite its equally long history of Confucianism and its attendant views of women. Certainly, there have been female resisters throughout Asia historically, and the complex dynamics



of the #metoo movement are still developing. But nonetheless, it does seem that the movement took root in Korea very quickly.

Ittai Shapira learned of *Chunhyang* in 2016, right before the U.S. presidential election. It had followed a pivotal year for his creative process. After helping to curate an evening at Carnegie Hall commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the liberation of the Theresienstadt Camp for an organization called Humanity in Action, he wanted to explore the role music literally played in saving people's life. He was particularly moved and inspired by the story of a children's performance of *Brundibar* at the concentration camp. This unexpected detail showed him that even in the darkest times, there were flickers of light and hope that could be nurtured by music. He was so struck by the discovery that he decided to write his own composition, a modern-day response to it. This became his composition *The Ethics*, which debuted at the commemoration and was performed at the Florida Holocaust Museum, as well as at American University in Washington, D.C., which was followed by a symposium about the topic. The composition made music not only a theme, but Shapira also saw in the performance of it the potential to be the very medium of healing and integration.

Around this time, he and philosopher Lauren Park were having conversations about her Korean heritage and her multicultural experiences being raised in America. At her suggestion, he started studying the story of *Chunhyang*, and he was struck by the main character's steadfastness and self-respect in the face of authoritarianism. The story provided a number of intersections of their mutual interest in healing and trauma.

Shapira also saw in Park's philosophical work ¹ the backbone of his own ideas about self-respect as the center for healing, integration, and ethical reflection. Self-respect, unlike narcissism, was a self-regard that one earned through right effort and based on values. In the story, *Chunhyang's* demands of her beau and the elderly magistrate reflected the same convictions she lived by in her own actions. Not only did she declare that to them publicly, but she also acted in accordance with them to the very end. Neither physical torture, nor imprisonment deterred her. The elderly magistrate embodies a kind of self-regard that is narcissistic — his value system and actions were not motivated by convictions, but only sought to satisfy himself no matter the cost to others. When his impulsive wishes were denied, he resorted instead to the other impulse: aggression. When *Chunhyang* still wouldn't succumb, he physically jailed her. His attempt to control *Chunhyang* ironically reflects his own inability to control himself.



Shapira sought to capture the layers and nuances of the themes in *Chunhyang* through music. To start with, he decided to compose the piece using the pentatonic scale, rather than the more common heptatonic scale. The pentatonic scale was used throughout the ancient world and is still used in a broad cross section of music today — from traditional music in Asia to American blues and jazz. The opening melody also has a rhythmic pattern that responds to the *Pungmul*, a traditional Korean dance with a pattern that can be found in the Celtic Gigue as well. The recurring musical trope of *Chunhyang* is like the recurring trope of the story: her self-respect — a single series of notes is the main arc and reappears throughout the score, though in slightly different variations. It reflects the story of the young woman as she is tested by different situations and demands. It also reflects the way in which self-respect can remain steadfast despite the variety of circumstances, cultures, and people. Moreover, like *The Ethics*, Shapira also saw the potential of *Chunhyang* to be transformative in virtue of its performance — to be not just thematically about recovery from violence, but also to help women in numerous [communities](#).²

The basic [melody](#) is reminiscent of *Arirang* (the most recognized folk music in all of Korea). But at different times in the score, with slight changes in tone and rhythm, the melody variously morphs into blues, then Celtic music, and then back to *Arirang*. Like self-respect, but also, more darkly, like trauma, which is an element of the story, the refrain is undeniably there, despite its various metamorphoses. The effortless shift in the music from one genre to another suggests a multidimensional, but integral experience. At other times in *Chunhyang*, there is dissonance — the music becomes tense and challenging, which interrupts the sweetness of the melody, just as trauma can be sudden and disruptive. But the dissonant parts never last. Indeed, at the end, the music is resolved into the happiest series of notes of the whole score. [In healing trauma](#), one hopes that every variation is improved, however slightly, from the one before and that it leads, in the end, to a harmonious integration with other memories and experiences. ■

¹ Park, Laureen. "Self-Respect in the Light of Narcissism," *Identity and Self-Respect*. Debrecen: University of Debrecen Publishers, 2013.

² Ittai Shapira is a consultant for Weill Cornell's Music and Medicine Program.



6.18.10

TREBLINKA

by Sylvia Flescher

no matter
 how many times
 i hear the story
 read the killing details
 imagine the corpses
 piled willy nilly
 the stench
 of decaying flesh
 mixing in the air with
 a s h e s f l o a t i n g
from the crematoria
 again and again and again
 truly i cannot
 comprehend

and yesterday when
 we walked along the peaceful
 Polish forest
 amid bird-song and purple lupines
 i could be forgiven
 for forgetting
 that we walked over
mass graves
 where my people lay
 beneath our feet
 doctors and cooks
 barbers and bakers
 jewelers and plumbers
 teachers and rabbis
 lawyers and nurses
 mothers and wives
 and oh! the children

i stood stunned and quiet
 amid the field of jagged stones
 each a village, a town, a city
 pointing sharply up to indifferent heaven
 e t e r n a l
 impermeable
 unlike the vanished
 abject Jewish flesh
 melting burning smoking
 in that man-made inferno

and back at our hotel
 as i tried to clean my dusty
 sandals and saw
 the damp cloth turn
 inky black
 then i knew for certain
 those ashes
 staining my toes
 were holy



Photography by Heilite Myers, Street Art, London, UK

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We invite you to consider ways in which processes of idealization and demonization are permeating our psychic and social structures, and how a psychoanalytic lens might help to inform our conceptions and interventions.

Please think broadly about these issues from your own discipline and perspective, and consider proposing multidisciplinary conversations that discuss these issues across disciplines or that invite commentary from a different discipline or interdisciplinary perspectives that integrate concepts and modes of knowledge production from different disciplines. Engaging other fields is invited so that our discussions enrich and expand our ability to explore voices and voicing such that both problems and possibilities might be further revealed.

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Marilyn Charles:

mcharlesphd@gmail.com

Lita Crociani-Windland:

Lita.Crociani-Windland@uwe.ac.uk

Children pray before eating at a shanty town in Higuerote, 117 km east of Caracas on August 26, 2016. As part of a volunteer program, thousands of Venezuelan children receive their school meals during holidays in an initiative to address food shortages affecting the country.



Photography by Federico Parro, Venezuela.

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ROOM ROUNDTABLE

We will hear from recent **ROOM** authors on issues such as the psychological effects of separating children from their parents at the border, and the challenge of navigating the ideological divide in our country.

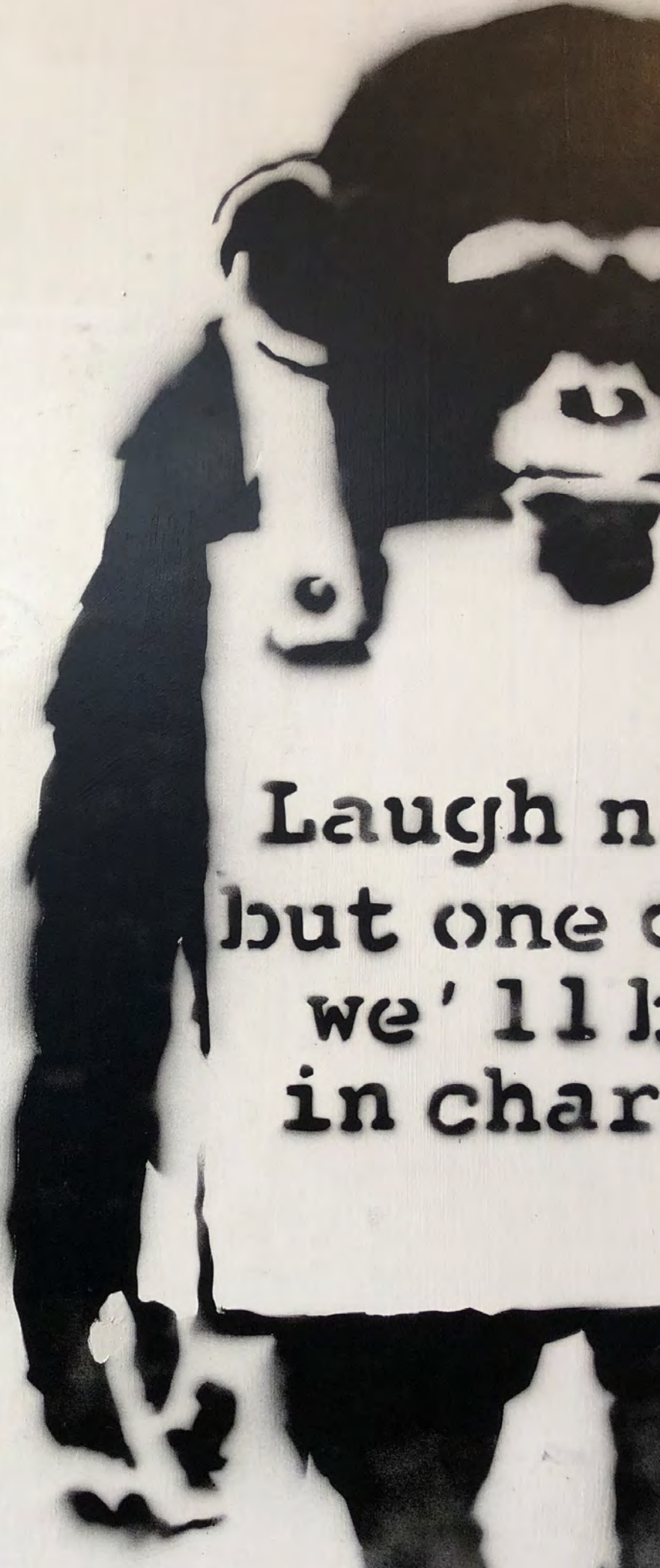
JULY 15th, 2018
IPTAR - 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

The next Room Roundtable will be held at:
THE INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHOANALYTIC
TRAINING AND RESEARCH (IPTAR)

Conference Room
1651 3rd Avenue suite 205
New York City, NY 10128

Facilitated by Richard Grose and Janet Fisher

We'll be streaming live through Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/analyticroom/>



CONTRIBUTE TO ROOM

ROOM: A Sketchbook for Analytic Action was created in 2017 in response to a bewildering and frightening political reality. This virtual analytic space is dedicated to providing on-going room for authentic and diverse thought. We welcome clinical, theoretical, political and philosophical essays, as well as poetry, stories, artwork, photography, and announcements. Add your voice to **ROOM**.

10.18 Open Call Submission Deadline: SEPT 10th, 2018

Mail Essays* | Poems | Art | Photographs
directly to: ROOMinIPTAR@gmail.com

*Length: Max 2000 words

ROOM IS FREE

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IPTAR (in care of Room)

at IPTAR 1651 3rd Ave — Suite 205
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Sheldon Bach, PhD, is an adjunct clinical professor of psychology at the NYU postdoctoral program for psychoanalysis, a training and supervising analyst at the Contemporary Freudian Society and the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research, and a fellow of the International Psychoanalytical Association. He is the author of several books on psychoanalysis and of many papers, some of which have been collected in *Chimeras and Other Writings: Selected Papers of Sheldon Bach*. He is in private practice and teaches in New York City.

Phyllis Beren, PhD, is a past president of IPTAR, a fellow and faculty member and director of the IPTAR Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Training Program. She is editor of the book *Narcissistic Disorders in Children and Adolescents* and has written papers about child, adolescent, and adult treatment. She is currently writing a memoir.

Lorenzo Figallo Calzadilla, PhD, is a sociologist and teacher with a clinical background in the fields of Alzheimer's, neuro-cognitive rehabilitation, and geriatrics. Calzadilla participates and speaks at community and corporate social responsibility programs. As an artist, Lorenzo works in clay. Known as "Raical" and "Sernelo," Lorenzo and his mother, Rhaiza Calzadilla, have created "Los Caminos del Barro" (The Paths of Mud).

Dorothea (Thea) Crites, MDiv, LMFT, has practiced as a pastoral psychotherapist and marriage and family therapist for thirty-five years, in private practice on the Upper West Side of Manhattan for the past twenty. She's an ordained United Methodist minister and recent graduate of New Directions writing program.

Roberto Echeto teaches at the Institute of Creativity and Communication (ICREA) and at the Andrés Bello Catholic University. Echeto has published three books of stories (*Liquid Tales*, *Galante Breviary*, and *The Classic Machine*), a novel (*There Will be No End*), and two essays, *70 Years of Humor in Venezuela* and *Elementary Maneuver*, which won the Transgender Contest of the Foundation for the Urban Culture in 2015 (Venezuela). He has produced radio shows and collaborated in magazines and newspapers. He publishes essays and short stories in his blog (Spanish): <http://robertoecho.blogspot.com/>

Federico Parra is a photojournalist who studied photography at Roberto Mata's Photography School and at the Nelson Garrido Organization Photography School. Parra covers breaking news, politics, and sports for the Agence France Presse based in Caracas. His photographs have been published by *Time*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Le Monde*, and the *Guardian*.

Sylvia Flescher is a psychiatrist/psychoanalyst and the daughter of a Holocaust survivor. Her paper "Googling for Ghosts" grew out of her long-standing participation in New Directions and was published in the *Psychoanalytic Review*. In it, she describes the powerful effect on her of her mother, Anna, being honored at Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations.

William W. Harris, PhD, is chairman of Children's Research and Education Institute. He is a child advocate who works with policy makers on efforts to increase the government's investments in low-income young children and families.

Gabriel Heller's writing has appeared in many literary publications, including *The Best American Nonrequired Reading*, *Electric Literature*, the *Gettysburg Review*, and the *Sun*. He is the recipient of the Fourteenth Annual Inkwell Short Story Award and a Special Mention in the 2018 Pushcart Prize Anthology. He teaches writing at NYU and is a respecialization candidate in psychoanalysis at IPTAR.

Leah Lipton, LCSW, is a psychoanalyst and collage artist in New York City. She is a supervisor at the Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy (ICP) and a faculty member at ICP and the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center (PPSC).

Juan Mariño is an emerging artist born in Valencia-Venezuela in 1987. Marino attended the Arturo Michelena Art Center located in Caracas. Now, Mariño lives and works in Valencia, where he continues his exploration in painting and ceramics.

Lauren Park, PhD, is an associate professor at City Tech, CUNY. Her research applies phenomenological approaches to analyzing empirical problems such

as conflict, interdisciplinarity, and narcissism. Her essay "Self Respect in the Light of Narcissism," in *Identity and Self-Respect*, edited by Istvan Bujalos (Debrecen: University of Debrecen Publishers, 2013) was the inspiration for Shapira's "Chunhyung."

Ittai Shapira is a soloist, composer, and curator who has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and China, at venues ranging from the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Louvre Auditorium to the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. He is the founder and artistic director of Sound Potential, an organization dedicated to medical, educational, and societal healing through music and a consultant for Weill Cornell's Music and Medicine Program. Websites: www.ittaishapira.com www.soundpotential.org

Special thanks to **Carlos Padrón**, PhD, for his contribution introducing Cuatro Por Venezuela non-profit.

Mafe Izaguirre is a New York-based Venezuelan visual artist, a graphic designer with twenty years of experience developing brand platforms, and an educator whose research focusses on the conceptual image of the mind in new media. For the last seven years she has led the strategic advisory firm, Simple7 Design Lab, managing marketing and outreach for brands. In 2016, Izaguirre moved to New York to pursue her research developing "machines that can feel" and to explore the creation of artifacts that mimic human senses and consciousness. She is currently an artist member of Fat Cat Fab Lab, the Long Island City Artist Association (LICA), a tech mentor at Mouse Inc, and the Bronx based non-profit DreamYard Project. In 2017, in collaboration with members of the IPTAR community, Izaguirre created ROOM. Website: www.mafeizaguirre.com Email: mafelandia@gmail.com



ROOM 10.18

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Photography by David Neuwirth, Street Art, London, UK.

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provides affordable, high-quality psychoanalysis and psychotherapy for adults, adolescents, and children. In collaboration with community partners, the ICC also runs on-site therapy programs at three schools and offers pro-bono services to refugees and asylum seekers.

NEW YORK, USA

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